DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 422 043 JC 980 366

AUTHOR	Ottenritter, Nan; Barnett, Lynn
TITLE	Bridges to Healthy Communities. AACC Project Brief.
INSTITUTION	American Association of Community Colleges, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY	Centers for Disease Control (DHHS), Atlanta, GA. Div. of Adolescent and School Health.
REPORT NO	AACC-PB-97-1
PUB DATE	1997-00-00
NOTE	10p.
CONTRACT	U87-CCU312252-02
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome; College Students; Community Colleges; *Disease Control; *Health Education; *Health Promotion; Partnerships in Education; *Prevention; *School Health Services; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS	Centers for Disease Control GA

ABSTRACT

The Bridges to Healthy Communities project assists community colleges in offering education and information services that help prevent HIV infection and other serious health problems in students. The five-year Bridges project emphasizes service learning as a community-building and intervention strategy for preventing HIV infection. This initiative features national data collection and dissemination, an information clearinghouse, advisory groups, a mentor team, and demonstration colleges. Key campus activities cover administrative and policy issues, alcohol/drug program expansion, co-curricular activities, curricular infusion, distance education, high school outreach, HIV/AIDS program expansion, peer education, service learning program expansion, and wellness program expansion. Contacts, mentors, and project highlights are provided for the 10 Bridges community colleges: College of DuPage, Illinois; Daytona Beach Community College, Florida; Holyoke Community College, Massachusetts; Kapi' olani Community College, Hawaii; Northern Virginia Community College, Virginia; Pitt Community College, North Carolina; Raritan Valley Community College, New Jersey; San Antonio College, Texas; Santa Barbara City College, California; and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College. Internet service information is provided for the CDC National AIDS Clearinghouse and other organizations funded by CDC. (AS)

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ED 422 043

Bridges to Healthy Communities

AACC Project Brief

AACC-PB-97-1

Lynn Barnett
Nan Ottenritter

American Association of Community Colleges

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AACC
American Association of Community Colleges

PROJECT BRIEF

AACC-PB-97-1

BRIDGES TO HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Bridges to Healthy Communities

Nan Ottenritter and Lynn Barnett

The *Bridges to Healthy Communities* project aims to help community colleges offer education and information programs and services that lead to the prevention of HIV infection and other serious health problems in students. The five-year *Bridges* project emphasizes service learning as a community-building and intervention strategy for preventing HIV infection. Supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, this AACC national initiative features national data collection and dissemination, an information clearinghouse, advisory groups, mentor team, and demonstration colleges.

The *Bridges* project acknowledges that more than information is needed to create behavioral changes that prevent HIV infection. Colleges must create a culture that increases the likelihood of healthy behavior. Creating that culture involves educating policy- and decision-makers, supporting institution-wide health promotion programs, and infusing HIV and related health issues into the curriculum. Comprehensive intervention programs can bring together campus and community, and involve individuals, families, schools, and communities. The *Bridges* project supports and encourages community colleges to improve student and community health through models of integrated activities in a variety of campus settings. The service learning approach aims to stimulate community-building activities that will move participants beyond self-defense education to caring, accountability, and active commitment to community health.

Ten institutions won grants to become *Bridges Colleges* in a September 1996 national competition. Five others participate as members of the mentor team.

- ***Bridges Colleges***
  - College of DuPage, IL
  - Daytona Beach Community College, FL
  - Holyoke Community College, MA
  - Kapi'olani Community College, HI
  - Northern Virginia Community College, VA
  - Pitt Community College, NC
  - Raritan Valley Community College, NJ
  - San Antonio College, TX
  - Santa Barbara City College, CA
  - Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, WI
- ***Bridges Mentors***
  - Broward Community College, FL
  - City College of San Francisco, CA
  - Community College of Philadelphia, PA
  - Honolulu Community College, HI
  - Middlesex Community College, MA

Key Campus Activities

- Administrative and policy issues
- Alcohol/drug program expansion
- Co-curricular activities
- Curricular infusion
- Distance education
- High school outreach
- HIV/AIDS program expansion
- Peer education
- Service learning program expansion
- Wellness program expansion

BRIDGES TO HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
American Association of Community Colleges

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BRIDGES TO HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

HEALTH AND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

by Charles Deutsch, Sc.D., Harvard School of Public Health

When most Americans hear the word "health," they think of doctors, hospitals, and insurance programs like Medicaid. Health insurance and access to care is rightfully a major national issue, but it's not all, or even most, of what we mean by "health." There's a big difference between the medical care people need when they're ill, and the conditions and behaviors that make them less likely to become ill in the first place, more likely to seek timely help when they need it, and more able to recover once they do.

The improvement in health status in the past thirty years is due more to the things people do for themselves than to things medical professionals do to them with high technology and expert training. And the widening health gap between the haves and have nots is due less to differential access to medical treatment, than to differences in the practices promoted or discouraged by their environment.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among Americans under 24 years of age, four causes account for almost 70% of deaths: motor vehicle crashes, other unintentional injuries, homicide, and suicide. These causes are preventable and related to a few behaviors, especially alcohol and drug abuse, failing to use seat belts and motorcycle helmets, and having firearms and other weapons. Among all age groups combined, three causes—heart disease, cancer, and stroke—account for nearly 75% of all mortality and a large amount of morbidity and expense. These conditions are also preventable and are substantially due to a few behaviors, especially tobacco use, excessive consumption of dietary fat and calories, and insufficient physical activity. Through unsafe sexual practices, each year about three million young people are afflicted with sexually transmitted diseases, and an undetermined number are infected with HIV. Thus, a handful of behaviors cause the major health problems that face the nation. These behaviors usually are established during youth, are interrelated, persist into adulthood, contribute simultaneously to poor health, education, and social outcomes, and are preventable.

Unlike medical care, health is not primarily individual and physical. Especially for young people, health is largely behavioral, and that means it has important emotional, mental, moral, and spiritual dimensions. For the same reasons, it is profoundly social and depends on cultures and environments far more than on "lifestyle choices." People are not equally free to make healthy choices, and for many people healthy choices are not as available or attractive as unhealthy ones.

Health has much in common with learning. Who is primarily responsible for making learning happen, the teacher or the learner? For the most part, we accept responsibility for creating conditions that maximize learning opportunities for the particular students we serve. We have to understand health in a similar way. We can't sit back and blame young people who know about AIDS but fail to use condoms, saying, "They had the information, the rest is up to them." Once we know that for large percentages of people information is not enough, we can't continue to say, "It should be!" Instead, we use education, policy and technology—as we did to increase seat belt use or decrease smoking—to create a culture that increases the likelihood of healthy behavior.

Community colleges should care about health for several reasons. People don't learn well if they're not healthy. The success of the institution's academic mission depends not only on the instruction it provides, but on the climate it creates—and its climate is about how students live, not simply how they do school work. People of all ages need to learn how to engage in the process of good health, not just for themselves, but for partners, children, family members, and neighbors. College is often the last chance to help people become effective agents of health. What's more, when it is broadly defined, health is an interesting theme through which to learn and practice skills useful in all sorts of careers.

So what's the Big Idea? If your college is about learning, then it's also about health. What is it doing to create an environment that encourages healthy practices among its own students? Does your college hold itself accountable for accomplishing measurable objectives that will improve the health of its community? We teach young people that they are responsible for their actions and, equally, for their inaction. The same is true for the institutions that teach them.

College of DuPage

Glen Ellyn, Illinois

Stop AIDS in DuPage (Project SAID)

In partnership with the county health department, area high schools, and community agencies, Project SAID is designing, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive, proactive HIV/AIDS prevention program to reduce at-risk behavior and create an environment emphasizing wellness. Students are working directly with HIV/AIDS patients and/or projects. Project SAID is institutionalizing an HIV/AIDS prevention education service learning experience at the college.

Project Highlights

- Administration and policy
- Curriculum infusion
- High school outreach
- HIV/AIDS program expansion

Contacts

Michael T. Murphy, President
Valerie M. Burke, Coordinator of Health and Special Services
Kathy Hennessy, Project Supervisor
College of DuPage
22nd St. and Lambert Rd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137-6599
PH: 630/942-2154
FAX: 630/858-9622 or 708/858-9399
burkev@cdnet.cod.edu

Mentor

Lucy Ogburn, Professor of Sociology
Middlesex Community College
Springs Rd., Bldg. 5
Bedford, MA 01730
PH: 617/280-3910
FAX: 617/280-3906
ogburnl@admin.mcc.mass.edu

Daytona Beach Community College

Daytona Beach, Florida

Daytona Beach Bridges to Healthy Communities

The project infuses HIV/AIDS education into the curriculum at Daytona Beach Community College and provides students with an opportunity to participate in service learning. Faculty are introducing HIV/AIDS learning modules into English, statistics, and certificate programs. The learning modules will complement the normal teaching materials in these courses/programs. The project is also establishing a Teaching Resource Center of HIV/AIDS prevention materials for faculty members.

Project Highlights

- Curriculum infusion
- Wellness education expansion

Contacts

Philip R. Day, Jr., President
Charles Carroll, Dean of Health Careers and Wellness
Joanne Pinkston-McDuffie, Professor of English
Daytona Beach Community College
1200 International Speedway Boulevard
Daytona Beach, FL 32114
PH: 904/254-4437
FAX: 904/254-4491
carrolc@dbcc.cc.fl.us

Mentor

Janet E. Parke, AIDS Oversight Chair/Senior Professor/Endowed Teaching Chair
Broward Community College
1000 Coconut Creek Boulevard
Pompano Beach, FL 33066
PH: 954/973-2318
FAX: 954/973-2315
janparke@ix.netcom.com

Holyoke Community College

Holyoke, Massachusetts

Make a Difference—The HCC Health Connection Project

In a city with escalating rates of HIV infection, a campus-wide outreach campaign is being conducted. Through a student peer health leadership training program, classroom presentations and faculty consultation, students and faculty are becoming active participants in developing HIV/AIDS prevention and other health service learning projects both on and off campus. Peer mentoring, biweekly reflection sessions, and journals are fostering critical and reflective analysis.

Project Highlights

- Curriculum infusion
- Peer education

Contacts

David M. Bartley, President
Jen Dolan, Health Educator
Isabel Huskey, Director of Student Support and Assessment
Holyoke Community College
303 Homestead Avenue
Holyoke, MA 01040
PH: 413/552-2180
FAX: 413/534-8975
ihuskey@hcc.mass.edu

Mentor

Lucy Ogburn, Professor of Sociology
Middlesex Community College
Springs Road, Building 5
Bedford, MA 01730
PH: 617/280-3910
FAX: 617/280-3906
ogburnl@admin.mcc.mass.edu

Kapi`olani Community College

Honolulu, Hawaii

Bridging Beyond the Classroom: Service Learning for Total Health and HIV Prevention

Bridging Beyond the Classroom is shaping classroom, campus, and community environments to encourage healthy practices by KCC students and the people they serve. The project includes: extensive curricular integration of service learning, total health, and HIV prevention in 18 courses; training workshops, lectures, film, and student-faculty reflection sessions; a wide range of service learning opportunities on campus and in the community; and use of the Internet for student reflection and education locally, nationally, and globally.

Project Highlights

- Administration and policy
- Co-curricular activities
- Curriculum infusion
- Distance education

Contacts

John Morton, Provost
Robert W. Franco, Associate Professor of Anthropology
Kapi`olani Community College
4303 Diamond Head Road
Honolulu, HI 96816
PH: 808/734-9285
FAX: 808/734-9828
bfranco@hawaii.edu

Mentor

Clint Gould, Associate Professor, Humanities/ Coordinator, AIDS Education Project
Community College of Philadelphia
1700 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130
PH: 215/751-8349
FAX: 215/755-9281
caucus@voicenet.com

Northern Virginia Community College

Annandale, Virginia

NVCC Bridges College Program

The project is improving comprehensive health and reducing HIV infection through enhancement of the Mobile Nurse-Managed Health Center program, a community-based service learning health promotion model of clinical practice. It is also increasing the college's literacy in comprehensive health and HIV prevention through institutional (academic/co-curricular) and service learning interventions. The aim is to build a regional infrastructure that promotes comprehensive health.

Project Highlights

- Co-curricular activities
- Curriculum infusion
- Peer education

Contacts

Richard J. Ernst, President
Charlene Connolly, Division Chair, Health Technologies
Dianne Duringer, NVCC Bridges Coordinator
Northern Virginia Community College
8333 Little River Turnpike
Annandale, VA 22003
PH: 703/323-3404
FAX: 703/323-4576
nvconnc@nvcc.va.us
nvdurid@nvcc.va.us

Mentor

Janet E. Parke, AIDS Oversight Chair, Senior Professor/Endowed Teaching Chair
Broward Community College
1000 Coconut Creek Boulevard
Pompano Beach, FL 33066
PH: 954/973-2318
FAX: 954/973-2315
janparke@ix.netcom.com

Pitt Community College

Greenville, North Carolina

Healthy Lifestyles through Service Learning

Using the Pitt Community College student population as a microcosm of the community, this initiative is creating a multi-faceted, interdisciplinary, personal responsibility program. Using service learning strategies, a cadre of peer educators is helping effect behavioral change by making healthy lifestyle choices and assisting their peers to do likewise. The program is resulting in a model for behavioral change specific to prevention of HIV infection and to prevention of related diseases.

Project Highlights

- Curriculum infusion
- Peer education

Contacts

Charles E. Russell, President
Carla Lewis, Nursing Department Chair
Linwood Woodard, Director of Health and Physical Education
Pitt Community College
P.O. Drawer 7007
Greenville, NC 27835-7007
PH:919/321-4337
FAX: 919/321-4451
clewis@pcc.pitt.cc.nc.us

Mentor

Carol Mulling, Director of Student Life/Development
Honolulu Community College
874 Dillingham Boulevard
Honolulu, HI 96817
PH: 808/845-9219
FAX: 808/845-9713
sl_mulling@hccada.hcc.hawaii.edu

Raritan Valley Community College

Somerville, New Jersey

Building Healthy Communities through Service Learning

The project is introducing current information on HIV/AIDS to students across the curriculum using intrusive intervention strategies. Components include: a peer education program for RVCC freshmen and high school students in the Tech Prep program; HIV/AIDS modules that can be integrated into different courses across the curriculum; assessment of the needs of community agencies and development of responsive programs and service learning activities.

Project Highlights

- Curriculum infusion
- High school outreach
- Wellness program expansion
- Peer Education

Contacts

Cary A. Israel, President
Sourri Baetjer, College Health Coordinator
Sally Custer, Professor of Health
Raritan Valley Community College
PO Box 3300
Route 28 West and Lamington Road
North Branch, NJ 08876
PH: 908/526-1200 x8872
FAX: 908/429-1125
sbaetjer@rvcc.raritanval.edu

Mentor

Clint Gould, Associate Professor, Humanities Coordinator, AIDS Education Project
Community College of Philadelphia
1700 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130
PH: 215/751-8349
FAX: 215/755-9281
caucus@voicenet.com

San Antonio College

San Antonio, Texas

Bridges to Healthy Communities through Wellness

San Antonio College is expanding its Wellness Program by using the current drug and alcohol prevention model to incorporate HIV/AIDS and other pressing issues on a commuter campus. The project includes a variety of approaches: service learning, curricular infusion in a variety of disciplines, peer education, staff development, information dissemination, co-curricular activities, collaboration with community and health agencies, and special events.

Project Highlights

- Administration and policy
- Alcohol/drug program expansion
- Co-curricular activities
- Curriculum infusion
- Peer education
- Wellness program expansion

Contacts

Robert E. Zeigler, Interim President
Ella M. Stiles, Professor of Nursing
Cathy McAuliffe, Wellness Coordinator
San Antonio College
1300 San Pedro Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78212-4299
PH: 210/733-2034
FAX: 210/733-2338
estiles@accd.edu
cmcaulif@accd.edu

Mentor

Clark L. Taylor, Resource Instructor/Coordinator of the AIDS Education Office
City College of San Francisco
31 Gough Street, Room 59
San Francisco, CA 94103
PH: 415/241-2373
FAX: 415/241-2329
ctaylor@ccsf.cc.ca.us

Santa Barbara City College

Santa Barbara, California

Project HOPE (Helping Others through Peer Education)

Project HOPE is increasing student awareness of healthy lifestyle issues to turn healthy behaviors into lifelong practices. It aims to reduce student behavior risks, especially those associated with unsafe sexual practices associated with alcohol and drug use. Designed to promote student, faculty, and community involvement, activities include service learning and curriculum infusion, peer health education, and community interaction.

Project Highlights

- Alcohol/drug program expansion
- Curriculum infusion
- Distance education
- Peer education

Contacts

Peter R. MacDougall, President
Susan D. Broderick, Director of Student Health Services and Wellness Program
Madeline Burridge, Health Educator
Santa Barbara City College
721 Cliff Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93109
PH: 805/965-0581 ext. 2299
FAX: 805/963-7222
broderic@gate1.sbcc.cc.ca.us
burridge@gate1.sbcc.cc.us

Mentor

Clark L. Taylor, Resource Instructor/Coordinator of the AIDS Education Office
City College of San Francisco
31 Gough Street, Room 59
San Francisco, CA 94103
PH: 415/241-2373
FAX: 415/241-2329
ctaylor@ccsf.cc.ca.us

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College

Shell Lake, Wisconsin

Bridges to Healthy Communities in Northwest Wisconsin

Building on a strong alcohol and drug abuse prevention program, this project is implementing an HIV/AIDS prevention initiative, based on a social ecological theory, into the existing college-wide wellness program for students and employees. The college's wellness prevention program encompasses interrelated academic, social, health, and spiritual strategies in partnership with external service providers. The project will build new partnerships with community health agencies, and design a service learning strategy with internal and external partnerships.

Project Highlights

- Administration and policy
- Alcohol/drug program expansion
- Co-curricular activities
- Curriculum infusion
- Wellness program expansion

Contacts

David Hildebrand, President
Wayne Sabatke, Vice President of Human Resources
Donna Kier, Health Coordinator
Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College
505 Pine Ridge Drive
Shell Lake, WI 54871
PH: 715/468-2815
FAX: 715/468-2819

Mentor

Carol Mulling, Director of Student Life/Development
Honolulu Community College
874 Dillingham Boulevard
Honolulu, HI 96817
PH: 808/845-9219
FAX: 808/845-9713
sl_mulling@hccada.hcc.hawaii.edu

CDC National AIDS Clearinghouse Internet Services

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
http://www.cdc.gov

CDC National AIDS Clearinghouse
http://www.cdcnac.org
Contains Internet order form for free HIV/AIDS-related materials online, movies of "Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself" public service announcements, AIDS Daily Summary for up-to-date prevention, treatment, and care issues.

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information Service (ATIS)
http://www.hivatis.org
Contains information on federally approved treatments, treatment related publications, and links to other treatment related sites.

AIDSNEWS Listserv
listserv@cdcnac.org
Contains AIDS Daily Summary, selected Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report articles, fact sheets, press releases from Public Health Service agencies such as NIH and FDA. To subscribe, send the message *subscribe aidsnews firstname lastname* to: *listserv@cdcnac.org*

Gopher
gopher://gopher.cdcnac.org:72
Contains AIDS Daily Summary, AIDS-related Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report articles, tables from CDC's HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, and documents from other federal agencies.

Anonymous File Transfer Protocol (FTP) Site
ftp://ftp.cdcnac.org/pub/cdcnac
Contains files of documents such as the current HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, Clearinghouse guides, and the Clearinghouse's Standard Search Series.

Other Electronic Resources

Journal of the American Medical Association
http://www.ama-assn.org/special/hiv/hivhome.htm

The NAMES Project
http://www.aidsquilt.org

Bridges to Healthy Communities is funded under a five-year cooperative agreement (#U87/CCU312252-02) between the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Division of Adolescent and School Health of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, under the provisions of Announcement 532, "Cooperative Agreements for a National System of Integrated Activities to Prevent HIV Infection and Serious Health Problems Among Students, Especially Postsecondary Students."

National Higher Education Organizations funded by CDC

American Association for Health Education, 1900 Association Dr., Reston, VA 20191; 703/476-3454

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, One Dupont Circle, Suite 610, Washington, DC 20036; 202/293-2450
http://www.aacte.org

AACC's national survey, ***Prevention of HIV and Other Serious Health Problems Among Community College Students***, has been distributed to all community colleges. For information, contact Nan Ottenritter (202/728-0200, x230). Results will be available in Summer 1997.

American Association of Community Colleges, One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 410, Washington, DC 20036; 202/728-0200
http://www.aacc.nche.edu

American College Health Association, P.O. Box 28937, Baltimore, MD 21240; 410/859-1500

Association of American Colleges & Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009; 202/387-3760

BACCHUS & GAMMA Peer Education Network, P.O. Box 100430, Denver, CO 80250; 303/871-3068
http://www.bacchusgamma.org

National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, Black Higher Education Center, 400 12th Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002; 202/543-9111
http://www.usbol.com/ctjournal/nateo1.html

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 1875 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 418, Washington, DC 20009; 202/265-7500
http://www.naspa.org

The College Fund/UNCF, 8260 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive, P.O. Box 10444, Fairfax, VA 22301; 703/205-3445
http://www.uncf.org

Bridges to Healthy Communities
Project Director: *Lynn Barnett*
Project Coordinator: *Nan Ottenritter*
Staff Assistant: *Charice Morgan*
Service Learning Clearinghouse Coordinator: *Gail Robinson*
American Association of Community Colleges
One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 410
Washington, DC 20036-1176
Phone: 202/728-0200, x230
Fax: 202/833-2467
nottenritter@aacc.nche.edu
http://www.aacc.nche.edu/spcproj

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